

Message Text

SECRET

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45

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 NEAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

EA-07 EUR-12 SCS-03 SCA-01 CCO-00 CIAE-00 DOTE-00

EB-07 H-02 INR-07 IO-13 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 SP-02

OC-06 PRS-01 SS-15 USIE-00 USSS-00 SY-05 WRD-01

SCCT-01 /110 W

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O R 241543Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6372

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

FAA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

S E C R E T CAIRO 11381

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, EG

SUBJ: EGYPT AIR HIJACKING

REF CAIRO 11367,

1. CAIRO SECURITY CHIEF GEN FUAD FARID GAVE EMBOFF HIS
ACCOUNT OF HIGHJACKING AND PROVIDED SOME DETAILS ABOUT ID-
ENTITY OF HIJACKERS. FARID SAID HIJACKERS HAD MADE AT LEAST
TWO MAJOR MISTAKES WHICH ENABLED EGYPTIAN PLAN TO SUCCEED.

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FIRST MISTAKE WAS RELEASE OF EGYPTIAN PASSENGERS AND SOME

WOMEN INCLUDING THREE EGYPTIAN MILITARY OFFICERS IN UNIFORM WHO WERE ON LEAVE. THESE OFFICERS HAD PROVIDED COMMANDOS WITH DETAILS ABOUT THE THREE HIJACKERS WHAT ARMS THEY CARRIED AND THEIR LOCATION IN AIRCRAFT. PLAN WAS THEN DEVISED TO BE PUT INTO EXECUTION AT 1730. SECOND MISTAKE WAS WHEN AT 1710 THE THREE COMMANDOS DRESSED AS MECHANICS WERE PERMITTED BY HIJACKERS TO ENTER THE PLANE AFTER HAVING SEARCHED THEM FOR WEAPONS (THEY CARRIED ONLY SCREWDRIVERS AND WRENCHES). AT 1730 ONE OF COMMANDOS HIT LEADER OVER THE HEAD WITH A WRENCH AT FRONT ENTRANCE OF PLANE AND COMMANDOS OUTSIDE SIMULTANEOUSLY FIRED AT WILL INTO THE AIR. IN ENSUING CON-FUSION THREE COMMANDOS ON BOARD AND CREW WERE ABLE TO SUBDUE REMAINING TWO HIJACKERS. OTHER COMMANDOS RUSHED INTO PLANE AND SHOT ONE OF THE HIJACKERS WHO WERE STILL STRUGGLING AND WAS ARMED. ONE CREW MEMBER WAS SHOT IN THE LEG.

2. FARID SAID THE PASSENGERS WERE THEN PERMITTED TO LEAVE PLANE AND THERE WAS NO SHOOTING AFTER PASSENGERS GOT OFF (THIS APPEARS TO BE ONLY MAJOR DISCREPANCY WITH AUSTRALIAN ACCOUNT SENT REFTEL).

3. FARID SAID ALL THREE HIJACKERS WERE IN MILITARY HOSPITAL (PRESUMABLY MAADI) AND WERE BEING INTERROGRATED BY MILITARY AND CIVILIAN INTELLIGENCE. THEY WILL BE TRIED PUBLICLY BY A MILITARY COURT MART MARSHAL. HE PREDICTED AT LEAST TWENTY FIVE YEAR SENTENCES FOR HIJACKERS.

4. THE LEADER, WHO WAS HIT ON HEAD WITH WRENCH AND THROWN OUT OF PLANE, IS ALI AHMED ALI MAHMUD OSMAN, BORN A PALESTINIAN IN 1944 AND IN POSSESSION OF JORDANIAN PPT 402987 ISSUED IN AMMAN 13 NOV 1973 (PROBABLY FALSE). PERMANENT RESIDENCE ABU DHABI. HE ARRIVED IN EGYPT ON 15 JULY 1976 AND WENT TO LIBYA ON AUG 1. HE RETURNED TO EGYPT ON AUG 8. HE HAS ADMITTED INTER ALIA THAT HE HAD BEEN PROMISED 100,000 LIBYAN DINARS (\$280,000) FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF MISSION.

5. SECOND HIJACKER WHO NOT SERIOUSLY INJURED IS HAHMUD NAGUIB AHMED MOHAMED MAHMUD, A COUSIN OF LEADER ALSO PALESTINIAN BORN IN 1951, POSSESSING JORDANIAN PPT 284338
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ISSUED IN AMMAN IN 1972. PERMANENT RESIDENCE KUWAIT WHERE HE EMPLOYED IN TV. FARID DID NOT SAY WHETHER OR NOT HE HAD ALSO GONE TO LIBYA.

6. THIRD HIJACKER IS EGYPTIAN AHMED MOHAMMED AHMED SULEIMAN DESCRIBED AS HELIOPOLUS SECONDARY SCHOOL DROPOUT IN HIS 20'S. HE WAS RECRUITED BY OTHER TWO FOR MONEY. RESIDENT OF MEDINAT AL-NASR (SUBURB OF CAIRO). HE IS BADLY WOUNDED.

7. FARID SAID INVESTIGATION THUS FAR INDICATES PALESTINIAN INVOLVEMENT, PERHAPS REMANTS OF SHIBAB QAWMI FORMERLY HEADED BY PALESTINIAN ABU MAHMUD, LIBYAN - BACKED TERRORIST WHO WAS ASSASSINATED BY FATAH IN BEIRUT IN 1973. FARID DESCRIBED QADHAFI RECRUITMENT TACTICS - IN FACE OF GOE SECURITY'S SUCCESS IN ARRESTING AGENTS - AS PROGRESSING FROM USE OF LIBYAN PARATROOPERS SENT TO ATTEMPT ASSASSINATE AMONG OTHERS ABU WAFIYA; CRIMINALS SENT TO ATTEMPT ASSASSINATE MUHAYSHI; WESTERN DESERT BEDOUINS RECRUITED FOR BOMBINGS; AND NOW PALESTINIANS WHO ARE APPARENTLY UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO ALWAYS RECRUIT AT LEAST ONE EGYPTIAN FOR POLITIFAL IMPACT IT COULD HAVE INSIDE EGYPT.

8. COMMENT: THIS IS MOST AUTHORITATIVE ACCOUNT OF LIBYAN INSTIGATION OF HIJACKERS THAT WE HAVE YET OBTAINED. PLAN FOR PUBLIC TRIAL OF HIJACKERS WOULD APPEAR TO SUBSTANTIATE OFFICIAL CLAIMS OF LIBYAN INVOLVEMENT AND WOULD FIT IN WITH GOE CAMPAIGN TO ESTABLISH THAT ANY ACTION EGYPT MIGHT WISH TO TAKE AGAINST QADHAFI WOULD BE JUSTIFIED.
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